

Message Text

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46

ACTION SS-30

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O R 031852Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO RUEHIXSECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0399

INFO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 8916

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGX: PFOR IS XF RO

SUBJ: VISIT OF ABBA EBAN TO BUCHAREST

REF: TEL AVIV 8894

1. FONMIN EBAN GAVE ME FURTHER DETAILS TODAY OF CIRCUMSTANCES RE HIS FORTHCOMING VNUIT TO BUCHAREST.

2. ON EVENING OF NOV 1, THE ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR COVACI ASKED TO SEE HIM ON URGENT BASIS. EBAN AGREED TO RECEIVE HIM, "FEARING THE WORST"--NEWS OF A BREAK IN RELATIONS--DESPITE RECENT REASSURANCES FROM BUCHAREST TO THE COUNTRY.

3. HE WAS NOT PLEASANTLY SURPRISED, THEREFORE, TO RECEIVE THE INVITATION TO VISIT BUCHAREST AT HIS CONVENIENCE BETWEEN NOV 4-12. GOI BELIEVED EBAN SHOULD RESPOND IMMEDIATELY TO ROMANIAN GESTURE.

4. EBAN WAS UNCLEAR IF THE ROMANIANS WERE INVITING REPRESENTATIVES FROM ARAB CAPITALS. HIS VISIT WAS BEING HANDLED AS A NORMAL BILATERAL AFFAIR. HE DID NOT, HOWEVER, EXCLUDE ROMANIANS WOULD TRY TO GET ONE OR MORE ARABS TO TRAVEL TO BUCHAREST AND BE PRESENT DURING EBAN'S VISIT, PRESUMABLY SO ROMANIANS COULD TRY TO PLAY A MEDIATORY ROLE OF SOME SORT.

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5. EBAN DID NOT EXPECT ROMANIANS COULD SUCCEED IN ARRANGING FACE-TO-FACE DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS AFTER SO MANY OTHERS HAVE FAILED. HE THOUGHT ROMANIAN FONMIN MIGHT TRY FOLLOW EBAN'S VISIT WITH OWN TRIP TO CAIRO AND OTHER ARAB CAPITALS

ON GOOD BET NO ARABS COME TO BUCHAREST.

6. EBAN NOTED THAT ISRAEL DID NOT EXPECT "ANYTHING OPERATIVE" TO COME OF VISIT, AND WAS NOT ENCOURAGING ROMANIANS IN THEIR HOPES OF GETTING INTO THE MEDIATION ACT. HE EMPHASIZED THE VERY COURAGEOUS NATURE OF ROMANIAN INVITATION, CITING THE ENORMOUS PRESSURES BEING PUT ON BUCHAREST TO BREAK RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. IN THIS RESPECT, HE SAID, COVACI STATED THAT INVITATION FOR VISIT WAS BUCHAREST'S WAY OF PUBLICLY AFFIRMING ITS INDEPENDENCE. EBLN NOTED THAT HIS QUICK ACCEPTANCE SHOULD BE VIEWED AS GOI APPRECIATIVE RESPONSE TO GUTSY ROMANIAN POLICY OF HOLDING FAST UNDER FIRE FROM SOVIETS AND ARABS.

7. I WONDER IF, DEPARTMENT WOULD CONSIDER KEEPING SOMETHING AS SENSITIVE AS THIS TELEGRAM OUT OF SITREP WHICH GOES WORLDWIDE. DO OUR EMBASSIES IN NICARAGUA, FIJI AND TOGO REALLY NEED TO KNOW? KEATING

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